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CONJECTURES

CONCERNING THE

N A T U R E

O F

FUTURE HAPPINESS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

~~MONSIEUR VIVIEN~~

Monf. BONNET of GENEVA.

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To the Reader.

Dublin, April 7, 1787.

I am happy in communicating to Men of Sense in this Kingdom, and at a very low Price, one of the most sensible Tracts I ever read.

JOHN WESLEY.

CONJECTURES, &c.

SECT. 1. IF a being, whose essence consisted in the union of two substances, were appointed to *continue*, he would continue as a *mixed* being, or he would be no longer the *same* being.

The doctrine of the Resurrection, therefore, is an *immediate* consequence of the *nature* of man, it is a doctrine perfectly philosophical; those who would refer every thing to the soul, forget the man.

Man is endowed with memory, and this memory belongs to the brain; it is the foundation of the *personality* of man, and the treasury of his knowledge.

If the *same person* is appointed to continue, he must preserve the *memory* of things past, and retain a certain fund of acquired ideas.

It must follow then, that there is in man a *seat* of personality, which is out of the reach of the causes that are *destructive* of the present life.

Revelation informs us that a *spiritual* body is to succeed to the *animal* body. The opposition of the word *spiritual* to the word *animal*, shews sufficiently that the future body will be formed of a very refined substance. And this is proved likewise by the remarkable expressions which the philosophical apostle has used, 1 Cor. xv. "All I have said on the resurrection amounts to this, that flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God, neither can corruption inherit incorruption."

The comparison, which the same apostle employs of a *grain of corn*, indicates also that the resurrection shall be only the *developement*, more or less rapid, of the *spiritual body*, lodged from the first in the animal body, as the *plant* in the *grain*; "But some one will say, how can the dead rise? And with what body will they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die."

This spiritual body destined to succeed the animal body, will doubtless differ from it not less by its *organization*, than by the *matter* of which it will be formed. In an abode so different, organs very different will be required. All the organs of the animal body, which have *relation* only to the *present life*, will doubtless be destroyed. Reason alone leads us to presume this; and revelation here, as in other respects, comes in aid to the efforts of reason. When revelation goes so far as to inform us that the stomach will be destroyed and sex abolished, it indicates to us the greatest changes in the material part of man. For in an organized whole, all the parts of which are so connected, what a prodigious change is supposed by the suppression of the organs of nutrition and generation?

It is an important question, says an anonymous writer,* "Those who find fault with revelation for not having made the objects of *faith* sufficiently clear, do they know that the thing was possible? Are they certain that the objects do not differ so much from *terrestrial objects* as not to be comprehensible by man? Our present manner of knowing depends on our *present constitution*, and we know not the *relation* that this *constitution bears to that which is to succeed it.*

We

* *Essai de Psychologie.*

We have no ideas but through the *senses*: it is by comparing sensible ideas with one another, it is by *generalizing*, that we acquire *notions* of different kinds. Our *capacity* of knowing therefore is limited by our *senses*; our *senses* by their *structure*; and this by the *place* which we occupy. We know, without doubt, of *the life to come* all that we can know here below; to give us more light into this future state, it seems it would have been necessary to change the present state. The time is not yet come for this change to take place: *we walk yet by faith, and not by sight.* The dull animal that browses the herb, abstracts not. It *distinguishes* a tuft of grass from a clod of earth, and this knowledge is sufficient for its present state. It would acquire knowledge more elevated, it would attain to our sciences and our arts, if the *essential* conformation of its organs were changed; but then it would be no longer the same animal. Would you make the sublime theory of infinitude enter into the brain of a child? This brain contains at present all the fibres necessary to the acquisition of this theory: but you cannot yet put them into action."

" Every thing in the works of nature is done by degrees; a *developement* more or less slow, conducts all beings to the *perfection* that *properly* belongs to them. Our soul is only beginning to unfold itself; but this plant, so weak in its principles, so slow in its progress, will extend its roots and its branches into eternity.

" The silence of revelation concerning the nature of our *future state*, is certainly a mark of its wisdom. The divine man, who taught mortal men a *resurrection*, was too good a philosopher

pher to talk of music to the deaf, of colours to the blind."

I will profit by the judicious advice of this writer: I will not forget that I am *blind* and *deaf*: I will not pronounce upon *colours*, nor upon *sounds*. Shall I, however, forget my *present* condition, if I hazard upon the nature of *future* *happiness* some light *conjectures*, which I shall deduce from some things which are known to me?

What this writer says concerning the impossibility of our representing the nature of future happiness is sound reasoning. *The dull animal that crops the grass, does it abstract!* By this comparison, he shews us that man can no more conceive the true nature of future happiness, than the animal can conceive the *intellectual* pleasures of man. The dull animal that crops the grass, can it have any idea of our *sciences* and our *arts*? Can the man, who is ignorant of so many things which belong to the world he *does* inhabit, form any idea of the things which belong to the world he only *will* inhabit.*

I think, therefore, "that we know of the life to come, all that we can know here below, and that to give us more light upon the subject of this future state, our present state must, it seems, undergo some change."†

This is very clear that we cannot arrive at the knowledge of objects, to which not only our *present* faculties bear no proportion, but which certainly suppose new faculties in order to their being apprehended or conceived. The most enlightened

* This falls full upon unbelievers, and upon all nominal christians. But it does not touch those who have that faith, which is the evidence of things not seen. J. W.

† Yes, we must be born again.

enlightened and penetrating of men, who should be without hearing, could he conceive the use of a trumpet?

If, however, a thick cloud conceals this *future happiness* which our hearts pant after, from our most eager search, we may nevertheless perceive, though faintly, some of the principle sources from whence it will proceed.

SECT. 2. **M**AN possesses three eminent powers; the power of knowing; of loving; and of acting.

We conceive very clearly that these powers are capable of indefinite improvement. We observe them in their developement, their progress, and their different effects. We contemplate with astonishment the admirable inventions to which they have given birth, and which demonstrate, in so striking a manner, the supreme elevation of man above all *terrestrial beings*.

It is, it seems, of the nature of *goodness*, as well as of *wisdom*, to perfect every thing that is capable of being perfected; but especially to perfect beings, who, possessing sentiment and intelligence, can taste the pleasure which accompanies the increase of their perfection.

But studying with some care the *faculties* of man, by observing their mutual dependance or that subordination which subjects them to one another, and to the action of their objects, we easily come to discover the *natural means* by which they unfold and perfect themselves here below. We may conceive, therefore, *means* analogous and more efficacious which may carry these faculties to a higher degree of perfection.

and you do me no wrong to say that this is true. The

The degree of perfection to which men can attain upon earth, has a direct *relation* to the means of knowing and of acting which are given him; these means themselves have a direct relation to the world which he inhabits.*

A more elevated state, therefore, of human faculties would not have had relation to this world, in which man was to pass his first moments of existence. But these faculties are capable of indefinite perfection, and we can easily conceive that some of the natural means which will one day perfect them, may exist in man even at present.†

Thus, since man was called to inhabit successively two different worlds, his original constitution must include things relative to these two worlds, the animal body must have a direct *relation* to the first world, the spiritual body, to the second.

SECT. 3. TWO principle means may perfect, in the world to come, all the faculties of man, viz. senses more exquisite, and new senses.

The senses are the first source of all our knowledge. Our most reflected and most abstract ideas, are always derived from our sensible ideas. The mind creates nothing; but it operates incessantly upon the almost infinite multitude of different perceptions, which it acquires by the ministry of the senses.

* Most true, all the natural means: But are there no supernatural? Monstrous to suppose that the soul cannot do it. Yea, and they may be "put into action" too.

From these *operations* of the mind, which always consist in *comparisons*, *combinations*, *abstractions*, proceed, by a *natural generation*, all the *sciences* and all the *arts*.

The *senses* appointed to transmit to the mind the *impressions* of objects, have a *relation* to the objects: the *eye* has a *relation* to *light*, the *ear* to *sound*.

The relations which the *senses* have with their objects, the more *perfect*, *numerous*, and *various* they are; the more do they discover to the mind the *qualities* of objects, and the more are its perceptions of these qualities clear, lively, and *compleat*. The more the *sensible* idea which the mind acquires of an object is lively and *compleat*, the more distinct is the *reflex* idea which is formed from it.

We conceive, without difficulty, that our *present senses* are susceptible of a degree of perfection much superior to what we know them to have here, and which astonishes us on certain subjects. We can even form to ourselves a pretty distinct idea of this increase of perfection, by the prodigious effects of optical and *acoustic instruments.

Let us suppose Aristotle observing a mite with our microscopes, or contemplating with our telescopes Jupiter and his moons, what surprise and delight would he not have felt! What shall not we too feel, when, cloathed in a spiritual body, our senses shall have acquired all the perfection which they can receive from the benevolent author of our being?

We can imagine, if we please, that our eyes will then unite in themselves the qualities of microscopes and telescopes, and that they will accommodate

* Assisting the Hearing.

commode themselves exactly to all distances ; and how much superior will the *glasses* of these new perspectives be to those of which art boasts so much ?

One may apply to *other senses* what I have said of the *sight*. But perhaps the taste, which has so direct a relation to nutrition, will be suppressed or converted into some other sense of more extensive and elevated use.

How rapid would be the progress of our mathematical sciences, if we were enabled to discover the first principles of bodies fluid or solid ? We should then see by intuition, what we endeavour to foretell by the aid of reasoning and calculation ; the more uncertain as our direct knowledge is more imperfect. What a numberless multitude of relations escape us, only because we cannot perceive the figure, the proportions, the arrangement of those infinitely small particles, upon which, however, depends the whole of the great edifice of nature !

SECT. 4. **N**EITHER is it very difficult for us to conceive, that the *germ* of the *spiritual body* may contain at present the organic elements of new senses, which will not be unfolded till the *resurrection*.

These new senses will then discover to us in bodies the *properties* which must always remain unknown to us here : how many sensible qualities which we are yet ignorant of, and which we shall discover with astonishment ! We know the different powers of nature, only by means of their relation to the different *senses* upon which they exert their *action*. How many powers are there of

of which we dont even suspect the existence, because there is no *relation* between the ideas which we acquire by our *five senses*, and those which we shall be able to acquire by *other senses*? Let us imagine a man who should be born with a perfect *palsy* upon three or four principle senses, and let us suppose *natural causes* which should give life and motion to these senses, and put them all into a proper state; what a croud of perceptions, new, various, and unforeseen, would such a man acquire in a little time! What a prodigious increase of improvement would he gain in all his faculties?

These new *senses*, the infinitely small minia-tures of which are enclosed in the *seat of the soul*, have a *direct relation* to that future world, our true country.

SECT. 5. **L**E T us raise our thoughts to the fir-mament of heaven, let us contem-plate that immense collection of *suns* and *worlds* that are *scattered* through space,* and wonder that this little worm, that bears the name of *man* has a faculty of reason capable of discovering the existence of these *worlds*, and of darting itself to the extremities of creation!

But this reason, endued with sight so penetrat-ing, with curiosity so active, and with desires so extensive, so lofty, and so perfectly suited to the dignity of its nature, must it be for ever confined to the narrow limits of a telescope? Has not the goodness of God, who has deigned to reveal himself to man by the wonders of the world he inhabits, in store for him yet higher revelations

* I doubt that fact. Let them prove it that can.

revelations in those worlds, where his wisdom and power shine with yet greater magnificence,‡ and where they are manifested in new and numberless ways ?

If our *reflex* knowledge is derived from our *intuitive* knowledge ; if our intellectual riches increase by the *comparisons* which we form among our *sensible* ideas of all kinds ; if the more we know, the more we compare ; if, in short, our understandings are unfolded, and perfected in proportion as our comparisons extend, diversify, and multiply themselves ; what will not be the increase and perfection of our *natural* knowledge when we shall be no longer confined to *compare* individuals with individuals, species with species, kingdoms with kingdoms, but shall be enabled to *compare* worlds with worlds ?

If the supreme intelligence has varied all his works here below ; if he has created nothing identically the same ; if an harmonious *progression* reigns among all *earthly* beings ; if the same *chain* comprehends them all ; how probable is it, that this wonderful *chain* extends itself into all the *planetary worlds*, that it unites them all, and that they are thus constituent parts of the same series ?

We discover at present of this great *chain* only a few *links* : we are not even sure that we observe them in their *natural* order ; we follow this admirable progression only imperfectly and with numberless turns and windings : and we meet with frequent interruptions ; but we always perceive that they are not so properly chasms of the chain, as of our knowledge.

When

‡ I doubt that.

When we shall have been allowed to contemplate this *chain*, as I have supposed those intelligences contemplate it, for whom our world seems to have been principally formed ; when we shall be able, like them, to follow the *prolongations* of it into other worlds ; then, and then only, shall we know the *natural order* of the *links*, their reciprocal dependence, their secret *relations*, the *proximate reason* of each link, and we shall raise ourselves thus by a *ladder* of *relative perfections*, to truths the most transcendent and luminous.

With what sentiments will our souls be filled, when, after having studied the *œconomy* of one world, we shall go to another, and compare their different *œconomies*? How great will be the perfection of our *cosmology*, the generalization and richness of our principles? How abundant the connexion, the multitude and justness of the consequences we shall derive from them? What light will be reflected from so many different objects upon the other branches of our knowledge, upon our *physics*, our *geometry*, our *astronomy*, the *rational sciences*, and principally upon the divine science which employs itself on the Being of Beings?

All *truths* are connected, and the most distant ones are held together by hidden ties. It is the province of the understanding to discover these ties. Newton, no doubt, was delighted with having been able to discover the secret *relations* of the fall of a stone to the movement of a planet ; transformed into a celestial intelligence, he will smile at this amusement of a child, and his high geometry will be to him only the first *elements* of another infinite.

SECT. 6. **B**UT the reason of man penetrates yet further than the planetary worlds: it raises itself to heaven where *God* dwells: it contemplates the august throne of the *Antient of Days*: it beholds all the spheres rolling beneath his feet, and obeying the impulse which his powerful hand has given them: it hears the acclamations of all intelligent beings, and mixing its adorations and praises with the songs of these hierarchies, it cries in the deepest sentiments of self-annihilation, "Glory be to God in the highest; good will towards man."

Good will towards man! Oh! the depth of the riches of the Divine Goodness! It is not content to manifest itself to man upon earth in so many different and affecting ways, but will one day introduce him to the heavenly mansions. "In our Father's house are many mansions; if it had not been so, his Son would not have said it. He is gone to prepare a place for us; he will return and take us with him, that where he shall be, we may be also." Where he shall be! where the King of men and angels shall be! the mediator of the new covenant; the author and finisher of the faith; he who has opened to us a new road, which leads to life! who has given us the power of entering into the holiest place; who has enabled us to approach the city of the living God; of the heavenly Jerusalem, of the heavenly host, of God himself, who is Judge of all.

If the goodness of God has been pleased to adorn so richly the first abode of man; if he has scattered around him such great beauties; bestowed on him so many favours; heaped on him so

so many blessings ; if all the parts of nature here below conspire to furnish to man inexhaustible sources of pleasure ; what shall I say ? If this unspeakable goodness surrounds and embraces man on all sides, what will be the happiness he will bestow on him in the heavenly Jerusalem ? what will be the beauties, the richness, and the variety of the magnificent spectacle that will be presented to him in the house of God, in that other universe where the self-existent being gives to the celestial hierarchies the most august signs of his adorable presence !

It will be in these eternal mansions, in the bosom of light, of perfection, and of happiness, that we shall read the *general* and *particular* history of *providence*. Initiated then to a certain degree into the profound mysteries of the Divine Government, laws and dispensations, we shall see with admiration, the secret *reasons* of so many *general* and *particular* events which astonish and confound us, and cast us into doubts which philosophy does not always remove, but with respect to which, religion always gives us confidence. We should meditate continually on the great book which contains the *destinies* of worlds. Stopping at that page of it, which exhibits those of this little *planet*, so dear to our infancy, and the first monument of the paternal affections of the Creator in regard to man ; we shall observe, not without surprize, the different *revolutions* which this little globe has undergone before it assumed its *present* form, and we shall follow it with our eye, to those which it is destined to undergo in the progress of ages. But what will exhaust our admiration and gratitude, will be the wonders of that great redemption, in which are yet so many things above our feeble comprehension,

prehension, which have been the object of the research and profound meditation of prophets, and into which the angels have desired to look. A word in this page will retrace also *our own history*, and explain to us, the reason and mode of those calamities, those trials, which often exercise here below the patience of the just man, purify his soul, heighten his virtues, and shake and cast down the feeble. Arrived at so superior a degree of knowledge, the origin of *physical* and *moral* evil will no longer embarrass us; we shall contemplate them early in their cause, and in their most distant effects; and we shall gratefully acknowledge, from conviction, that every thing which God had made was good. On earth we observe only effects, and even these in a very superficial manner, all causes are hid from us: but then we shall see *effects* in their *causes*; *consequences* in their *principles*; the history of *individuals* in that of the *species*; the history of the species in the history of the *globe*; "Now we see as through a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face; and we shall know, in some sort, as we have been known." In short, as we shall attain to a knowledge of the *work*, incomparably more compleat and distinct, we shall also attain to a much more profound knowledge of the *maker*. And how will this science the most sublime, the most enlarged, and most desirable, or rather the only science, be continually perfecting itself by an intimate communion with the eternal source of all perfection!

SECT. 7. **O**UR powers of affection are in reality very limited here below, imperfect,

imperfect, blind, and grossly interested. How much do all our *affections* partake of *flesh* and *blood*! How narrow all our *hearts*! How hardly do they enlarge themselves, and extend to mankind in general! The nature, indeed, of our constitution, opposes the purification and enlargement of this faculty of love. With what difficulty does it reach with any strength to the *Being supremely good*!

Our wants, perpetually returning, attach us to the objects that are able to satisfy them. The circle of our affections hardly extends beyond these objects. It seems that our *capacity of love* is not sufficient to enable us to love what has not an immediate relation to us as individuals,* Our self-love seeks only self, it sees and feels itself in all that surrounds us. Every thing that is agreeable renews it, and it is seldom sufficiently elevated to be strongly affected, with the sole pleasure of making others happy. There is always something *earthly* that mixes itself with our most delicate sentiments, and our most generous actions. Minds of sensibility, the greatest and most noble, necessarily retain something of the *material* part of their being. How much of it, especially, enters into that *passion*, so engaging and so terrible in its effects, which makes its power felt by all, and without which, the species would be no more!

Such is the nature here on earth of our power of good-will towards others, such are its limits, its imperfections, its blemishes. But this power so excellent, so forcible, so fruitful in various effects, so *expansible*, encumbered at present with the bonds of the *flesh*, will one day be disengaged from them; and he who has made us to love him,

and to love one another, will enoble, will purify, and exalt all our desires, and make all our affections converge towards their greatest and noblest end.

When we shall have been clothed with that spiritual and glorious body, which faith expects, our will, perfected in proportion to our knowledge, will have such *desires* only, as are suited to the high elevation of our new being. It will tend continually to all good, to the true good, to the greatest good. All its *determinations* will have an object, and the best object. *Order* will be the immutable *rule* of its desires : and the author of order, the centre of all its affections. As it will be calm and deliberate, because our knowledge will be distinct and very extensive, its *inclinations* will be constantly proportioned to the *nature* of things, and it will exert its love in just proportion to the *perfection* of every being. Knowledge will assign to every being its just value ; it will form an exact scale of relative values ; and the will, enlightened by knowledge, will no longer mistake the true worth of things, nor confound apparent with real good.

Delivered for ever from the *corruptible* part of our nature ; clothed with *incorruption* ; united to the light ; + our senses will no longer degrade our affections : our imagination no more corrupt our hearts : the grand and magnificent images it will continually offer, will animate and warm all our sentiments : our power of *loving* will exalt and display itself more and more, and the sphere of its activity will enlarge itself, embrace the intelligences of all orders, and concentrate itself in the supremely beneficent being. Our happiness

* Probably the spiritual body, of which Revelation speaks, will be formed of a matter similar to that of Ether or Light.

pines will be increased by the pure and lively perception of the happiness of our fellow creatures, and of the happiness of all sensible and intelligent beings. It will receive greater increase still, by the conscious and delightful sentiment of the approbation and love of him, who will be all in all ; our hearts will burn continually with the beautiful fire of Charity, of that celestial Charity, which after having scattered a few sparks here on earth, will brighten every part of the abodes of innocence and peace. *Charity will never fail.*

SECT. 8. THE force as well as the capacity of our organs, is very limited here below. We cannot exercise them for any length of time, without the painful feeling of fatigue. We must encounter a continual resistance to convey ourselves, or rather to *creep* from one place to another. Our *attention*, that fine faculty, that decides concerning things in the *intellectual* life, our attention is wearied by being divided, and exhausted by being concentrated. Our *memory* retains with difficulty what is committed to it ; it suffers daily losses ; age and a thousand accidents threaten, injure, and destroy it. Our *reason*, the most valuable quality of our nature, depends in the last resort upon a few delicate fibres, which slight causes may, and sometimes do disorder. What shall I say more ? Our whole machine, so dear to us, and in which such prodigious art appears, is always near sinking under the weight, and by the continued action of its springs. It subsists only by external aid, and by a species of artifice.

The

The principle of *life* is precisely the principle of *death*, and that which enables us to *live*, is in reality that which causes us to *die*.

The animal body is formed of very *heterogeneous elements*, the harmony of which, a multitude of small powers tend perpetually to disturb. Some *external elements* must continually unite themselves with the *primitive elements*, in order to renew what intestine motion and transpiration is continually dissipating; the perpetual action of the vessels, necessary to the replacing of those elements gradually injures the general *œconomy* of the machine, hardens the parts, which should continue supple, choaks up the passages, which should continue permeable, changes the *respective disposition* of the parts, and destroys at length the *equilibrium* between the weights and the springs.

The *spiritual body*, formed probably of elements analogous to those of light, will not require these daily *reparations*, which preserve and destroy the *animal body*. That glorious body which we are to put on, will subsist no doubt by the energy alone of its principles, and of the profound mechanism of its construction. It is probable, that this *ethereal body* will not be subject to the action of *gravity*, as the gross bodies are which we are acquainted with. It will obey with an astonishing facility all the volitions of the soul, and we shall transport ourselves from one world to another, with a celerity perhaps equal to that of light. Under this glorious *œconomy* we shall exercise all our faculties without fatigue; as the new organs in which the soul will display its *motive force* will be better proportioned to the energy of this force, and as they will no longer be subject to the influence of the causes which disturb and continually conspire against

against the present œconomy. Our *attention* will lay hold at the same time, and with equal force, of a greater number of objects more or less complicated ; it will penetrate them thoroughly ; distinguish all the particular impressions ; discern the slightest resemblances, and differences, and deduce from them, without effort, the most general results. Our *genius*, then, will be proportioned to our *attention* ; for attention is the parent of genius. What has once taken hold of the memory will never be effaced ; because the fibres to which it will be attached in this new œconomy, will not be exposed to an infinity of little internal impulses, which tend continually in this life to change the respective position of the elements of these delicate organs, and to destroy the directions which the objects have impressed on them. Our *memory* will enrich itself then without limits : it will incorporate with itself entire *worlds*, and present to the understanding without alteration or confusion, the immense *nomenclature* of these worlds ; what do I say ? It will not be simply a *nomenclature* : it will be the natural history *general* and *particular* of these worlds, the history of their revolutions, of their population, of their legislation, &c. And as the *organs* always *correspond* with the objects whose *impressions* they are to transmit to the soul, it is to be presumed that the knowledge of so prodigious a number of objects, and so different in themselves, will depend on a set of organs infinitely superior to that which *relates* to our *present* œconomy. The *signs* of our *ideas* will be multiplied, diversified, and combined, in an exact relation to *objects*, of which they will be the *symbolic representations* : and the *language* or *languages* which we shall then possess, will have an expression, a readiness, a richness, of which the languages we are now acquainted

quainted with can give but very faint images. Because we shall see things in a manner incomparably more perfect, therefore we shall also express them in a manner incomparably more perfect. We observe here below that the *perfection* of *languages* corresponds to that of the understanding, and that the more the mind *knows*, the more it *expresses*: we observe also that *language* in its turn perfects *knowledge*; and the learned language of geometers, this beautiful language which possesses so high a degree of *symbolic expression*, may assist us in conceiving the possibility of a language truly *universal*, which we shall one day possess, and which probably is that of *superior Intelligences*.

The *animal* body contains many things which have a *direct* relation only to the *preservation* of the *individual* or to that of the *species*. The *spiritual* body will contain things only which are relative to the *increase* of our perfection *intellectual* and *moral*. This spiritual body will be in some sort an universal organ of knowledge and sentiment. It will also be an *universal instrument*, by means of which we shall execute an infinity of things, of which we can at present form only very vague and confused ideas.

If the *animal* and *terrestrial* body, which death destroys, contains such great beauties; if the least of its parts can exhaust all the understanding and sagacity of the most able anatomist; what will be the beauties of this *spiritual* and *celestial* body, which shall succeed the perishable body: what an *anatomy* that which shall employ itself upon the *œconomy* of this glorious body; which shall perceive the mechanism, the energies, and the design of all its parts; which shall perceive the physical relations of the *new œconomy* to the *old*, and the more numerous and complicated relations of the *new organs* to the objects of the *life to come*.

SECT. 9. THERE is among men here on earth, an almost infinite diversity of gifts, talents, knowledge, inclinations, &c. The *scale* of humanity rises through innumerable steps from the *brute* man to the *thinking* man. This *progression* will continue no doubt in the life to come, and will preserve the same essential relations: in other words, the progress which we shall make here in *knowledge* and in *virtue* will determine the point from whence we shall begin our progress in the other life, or the *place* we shall there occupy. What a powerful motive to excite us to grow continually in knowledge and in virtue.

All the moments of our individual existence are indissolubly connected one with another. We do not pass from one state to another state without a sufficient reason. There are no *leaps*, properly so called. The *subsequent* state has always an *adequate* cause in the state which immediately *preceded* it. Death is not a *break* in the *chain*: it is the link which connects the two lives, or the two parts of the chain together. The judgment which the sovereign Judge shall make concerning us, will have its foundation in the degree of perfection *intellectual* and *moral* which we shall acquire upon earth; or, which is the same thing, in the use we shall have made of our faculties and of the talents which shall have been committed to us: "of him to whom much has been given, much shall be required; and to him that hath, shall be given." What is, is. The Divine Will does not change the nature of things; and in the plan which is in existence, Vice cannot obtain the advantages of Virtue.

It

It follows from these *principles*, which are derived from reason, that the *degree* of *acquired perfection* will determine, in the life to come, the *degree* of happiness or of glory which each individual shall enjoy. *Revelation* also gives its sanction to these philosophical principles. It establishes expressly this *gradation* of happiness or of glory, which the Philosopher is unwearied in contemplating. "There are bodies celestial, and bodies terrestrial, but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another; there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and a different one of the stars, for one star differeth from another star in glory, so also will it be at the resurrection." If it be judged that these remarkable words will not bear the interpretation I have given them, that declaration of scripture, "that God will render to every one according to his works," will be sufficient to prove that the degrees of future happiness will be as various as the degrees of virtue shall have been. Now how much do the degrees of virtue differ upon earth! How much does the virtue of the same individual encrease by new efforts, or by reiterated acts! Virtue is a habit, it is the habit of goodness.

There will therefore be a perpetual *advance* of all the individuals of humanity towards greater perfection or greater happiness; for one degree of *acquired perfection* will lead of itself to another degree. And because the distance between created beings, and the uncreated being, between finite and infinite is infinite, they will tend continually towards supreme perfection, without ever arriving at it.

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